

Community Engagement Institute (CEI) Monthly Newsletter

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AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER

CEI HIGHLIGHTS

EXCITING NEWS: AMERICORPS GRANTS RENEWED!

We're thrilled to announce that both our AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA grants have been renewed and are set to kick off on Sept. 1, 2024! This renewal marks a significant milestone for our programs.

Over the last decade, our AmeriCorps State program proudly placed 30 dedicated volunteers in part-time positions across Wichita, while our AmeriCorps VISTA program engaged 10 passionate volunteers in full-time roles throughout Kansas. Together, these programs have made a lasting impact on our communities.



In the last decade alone, 237 volunteers have contributed their time and talents through our AmeriCorps programs at Wichita State University, with some serving more than one year. Their commitment and service have been instrumental in driving positive change and strengthening our community.

We look forward to another year of impactful service and collaboration. Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to make a difference together!

[Learn more](#) about the AmeriCorps Kansas and VISTA programs.



ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS FOR A BETTER FUTURE: COD HOSTS STATEWIDE INPUT SESSIONS

CEI's **Center for Organizational Development (COD)** took significant steps to ensure that the voices of Kansans are heard in shaping the future of care for our frail elderly and those with physical disabilities. Through a series of 13 public input sessions held across the state and online, stakeholders—including caregivers, healthcare providers, and community members—were given the opportunity to learn about important upcoming changes to the Frail Elderly and Physical Disability Waivers.

These sessions were more than just informational—they were a platform for meaningful dialogue. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences, and provide valuable feedback that will directly influence the future of these critical waivers. The insights gathered will play a key role in enhancing the support services that so many depend on.

Our work doesn't stop here. As we move into fall 2024, we'll continue this collaborative effort, ensuring that the state's ongoing initiatives to improve these waivers reflect the needs and concerns of those most impacted.

For more details and to stay informed about upcoming sessions, visit the website [here](#).

CEI PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: JUNIPER ARTS ACADEMY

Juniper Arts Academy is dedicated to providing quality fine arts education and youth development to young people in Kansas' foster care and juvenile justice communities. Utilizing trauma-informed approaches, including Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), Juniper Arts Academy strategically designs its curriculum and structure to meet the unique educational and emotional support needs of youth who have experienced trauma. Through a diverse curriculum of music and art courses, students develop essential social-emotional and educational skills that are often otherwise inaccessible.



This past summer, 84% of students attending Juniper Arts Academy's music camp had limited or no prior access to quality fine arts education. Through a partnership with CEI via the Community Growth Initiative Mini-Grant, Juniper Arts Academy successfully launched equitable fine arts education programs, including its Music and Art Club. These programs are delivered directly onsite at youth residential and juvenile justice facilities, providing all necessary supplies, instruments, and instructors at no cost to the facilities. This approach ensures that financial constraints and transportation challenges do not hinder students from accessing vital social-emotional and educational development opportunities.

This fall, Juniper Arts Academy will proudly host a visual arts show featuring artwork created by its students. To stay updated, follow Juniper Arts Academy on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) or visit the website at www.juniperartsacademy.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

PUBLIC HEALTH ASPIRE SERIES

Free Virtual Sessions
 Sept. 17 and 24, Oct. 1 and 8
 10 - 11 a.m.

Public health aspires to achieve optimal health for all and believes that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being by addressing social determinants of health.

Consider you and your health department's role in this work by joining the **Kansas Public Health Collaborative** for a series focused on the *Impact of Social Connectedness*.

Be sure to register by Sept. 16!

[Register](#)



KANSAS PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE (KPC) CONFERENCE 2024

Harvesting Hope in the Heartland
 October 3 - 4 | Pre-Conference: October 2 | Wichita Marriott

Secure your spot at a discount! Early bird registration for the Kansas Prevention Collaborative Conference ends September 3!

The conference provides educational opportunities to increase awareness of emerging trends, build skills and knowledge to prevent suicide, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse, and advocate for best practices. The conference hosts state and local professionals from the various facets of the substance misuse prevention field and related disciplines. You'll be able to choose from a long list of evidence-based sessions as well as learning from our keynote speakers.

This year's theme, "Harvesting Hope in the Heartland," is perfectly captured by the inspiring voices of young Kansans dedicated to improving their community. The opening keynote features four remarkable Kansans: **Izzy Blackwood, Jasmine Figueroa, Tom Nguyen, and Zach Dixon**. These young leaders will share their experiences, passions, and hopes in the field of prevention. This session promises to be a powerful reminder of the vital role youth play in shaping effective prevention strategies and creating healthier, safer communities for all.

The role of youth in primary prevention cannot be understated - they should be included in the assessment, capacity, planning, implementation, and evaluation of prevention efforts. All too often, substance use prevention coalitions find a youth representative but unconsciously treat them as a token member or recipient of services, rarely engaging with them and the vast potential they possess. What if we engaged youth in a way that was meaningful and purposeful to them AND to the adults working on the coalition? How we talk about and to young people matters in the approach and sustainability of youth participation. Let's explore ways to shift mindsets and amplify prevention work through youth engagement. Join **Rikki Barton** to explore ways to shift mindsets and amplify prevention work through youth engagement.

[Register](#)

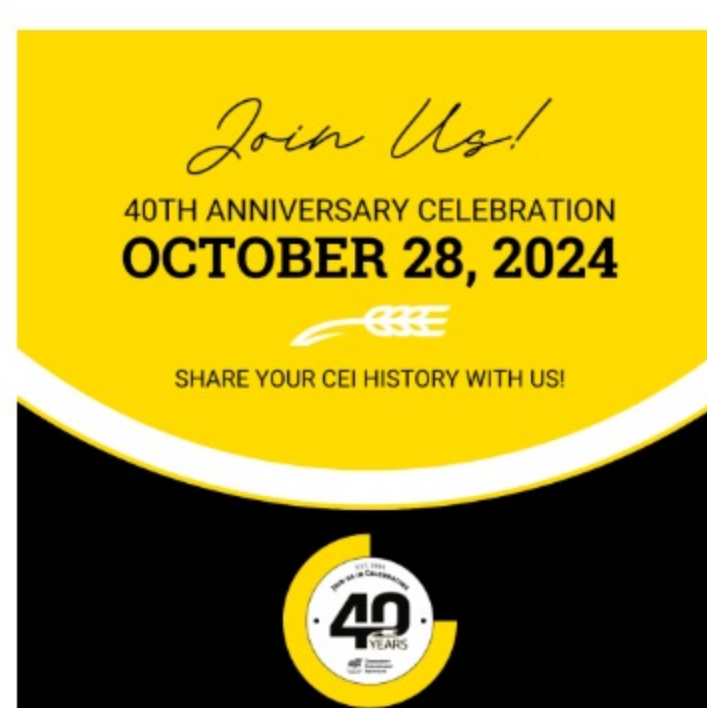


CEI'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

October 28 from 4 - 6 p.m. | Wichita, Kan.

What history do you have with CEI? Share your CEI memories with us so we can share them at the celebration. More details to come!

[Share your CEI history](#)

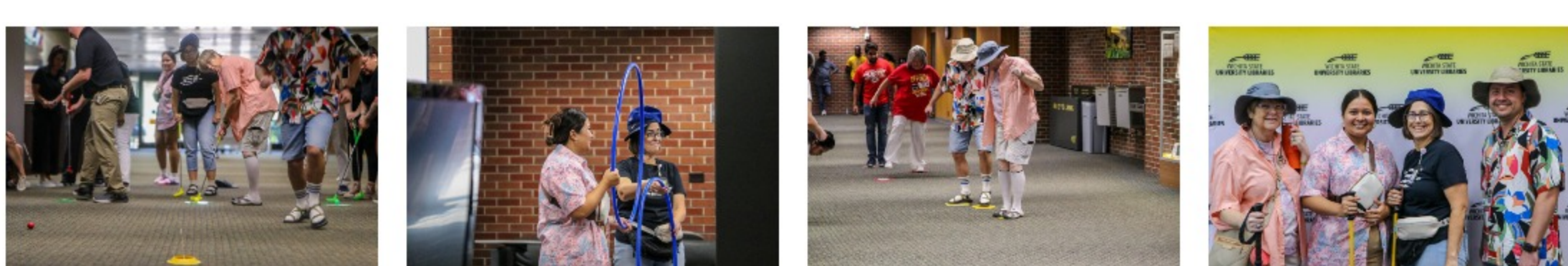


OPEN POSITIONS

- COMMUNITY PROGRAM SPECIALIST - LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT
- PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALIST

WHAT CEI IS UP TO

CEI's Business Operations team, dressed as "tacky tourists," had a fantastic time participating in the WSU Faculty and Staff Olympics taking place. The event was filled with friendly competition, teamwork, and plenty of laughter as teams competed in various activities such as rowing, a matching relay, darts, bowling, mini golf and javelin. It was a great opportunity to bond with colleagues and celebrate our Shocker spirit. The enthusiasm and energy were palpable, making it an unforgettable experience for everyone involved. We're already looking forward to the next Olympics!



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Archived Newsletters

Want to learn more about community health assessment and planning? Check out these models, frameworks and tools from local and national partners.

- 2024
- 2023
- 2022